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*To the small church that hasn't  
 tried it . . .*

# How to Double Your Education Space, Free!

*Melvin Hampton*

October 1969 found us in a real dilemma. An enlargement campaign had been scheduled. The preparation had been made with a telephone survey providing a list of prospects and the church roll providing a list of potential leaders. There was just one thing wrong: there was no place to put classes, departments, or prospects, or the leaders! Every available space had been filled. There were no stairwells, no corners to be used, nor were there any unused rooms available. It seemed useless to have an enlargement campaign until something could be done about space. However, we voted to go through with the campaign anyway. How could we hold anyone we might reach in our visitation enlistment when we were already at maximum capacity? We had space for only about 100 people in the basement and the auditorium upstairs with two small rooms on each side of the choir and baptistry, and we were averaging 144 in Sunday School. There

didn't seem to be anything that could be done because of the present debt and the insufficient financial support by the church membership.

One afternoon during the campaign, a deacon approached the enlargement campaign director and the pastor with a proposal that would meet our needs temporarily. He suggested using the present facilities twice each Sunday morning. The idea caught on with the church membership when it was presented that evening. After many of the problems were anticipated, discussed, and resolved, the church adopted the recommendation and proceeded to put the plan into effect.

A schedule of two worship services, one at 9:45 and the other at 11:00 o'clock, and two Sunday School study periods were set up. The school-age children would worship at 9:45. This meant that the Youth choir would provide special music and lead in the singing during this youth service. The preschoolers and the adults would be in Bible study at this same time. At 10:50 the youth service would be dismissed, and the young people would move to the basement by the designated route for their Bible study as the Adult and Preschool departments entered the auditorium by another route for the regular morning worship at 11:00 o'clock. The Adult choir presents the selected music for this service.

There were some problems to be ironed out such as Adult choir members who worked with the youth. They had to decide where God would have them serve, and replacements had to be found for vacancies. Pianists and music directors had to be enlisted. The schedule had to be worked out to operate smoothly. There had to be a willingness for some families who had been together in worship now to be divided, as the children would be in a separate worship service and sometimes wives and husbands would be in different worship services.

The following are advantages of a two Sunday School-worship schedule: (1) It allows time to plan adequately and to begin to raise funds for building. (2) The training of new teachers and leaders can begin before the building is even begun by providing in-service training as well as leadership training classes. (3) We can continue to exercise our commitment to Christ as he commanded in the Great Commission. ●

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